

THE SOUTHERN SLAV LIBRARY.—VI.

Political and Social  
CONDITIONS  
in Slovene Lands

[Carniola, Carinthia, Illyrian Littoral  
and Styria].

LONDON:  
THE NEAR EAST, LIMITED,  
Devonshire Square, E.C.  
1916.

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# POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN SLOVENE LANDS

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## SERBO-CROAT ORTHOGRAPHY.

š = sh in English “ <i>ship.</i> ”	j = y in English “ <i>you.</i> ”
c = ts       ,,       “ <i>cats.</i> ”	ž = in French “ <i>jour.</i> ”
č = ch       ,,       “ <i>church.</i> ”	nj = n in English “ <i>new.</i> ”
ć = (the same, softer).	g = g       ,,       “ <i>got.</i> ”

# POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN SLOVENE LANDS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

It is a political principle of the past, that only States which are organised as sovereign units, even though their coherence be due solely to force, can be juridic individualities in international relations, and enjoy the protection of international law. Since the Great Revolution, sundry nationalities have developed and attained a civilization of their own, even while forming part of one of the large and forcibly united political organisations, such as Austria-Hungary for instance. A time must come when these nationalities, encouraged by their own initiative and creative work, aspire to play their part in the political and social life of Europe.

Austria-Hungary has during the constitutional struggles of more than half-a-century proved herself utterly incapable of guaranteeing these nationalities the possibility of a healthy evolution by permitting the creation of a system of self-government. On the contrary, Magyar junkerdom was in league with Pangermanism to nip in the bud every movement for constitutional reform.

But not only internal politics were directed by a minority representing the ruthless and tyrannical domination of two races, and of a reactionary and oligarchic caste.

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The nationalities which were excluded from this hegemony were compelled to submit without protest to the terrible consequences of a disastrous foreign policy. The amazing organisation of the Dual Monarchy successfully precluded all participation of the democratic masses and the Slavs in the great decisions of the State.

The fundamental principle of every honourable democracy—"equal duties, equal rights"—was in the Dual Monarchy made to yield to a ruthless system of exploitation on the part of a racial and social oligarchy. In Austria the democratic institutions of national service and universal suffrage degenerated into mere parodies.

It is to be hoped that when the time comes to adjust the present political imbroglio, a new social principle will be observed.

Not only the sovereign states, but also the creations of the present day, those nationalities which, while possessing a national civilization, but deprived of political independence, have suffered only too bitterly by their political Calvary, must be given the chance of a hearing, so that the public opinion of Europe may have the opportunity of discussing their national demands.

A true and sincere international community of States cannot exist until the national problems of Europe have found a just and final solution; a solution which will have for its object the preservation of the social forces and the durable peace of Europe. Only thus can the achievements of peace and civilization make due progress, and an era of peace and harmony between the different groups of States be truly established.

These remarks apply especially to the territory inhabited by that part of the Southern Slav nation which calls itself Slovenes, viz., the provinces of Carinthia, Carniola, the Illyrian coast-lands, and Styria. Their fate will be one of the most important problems in the forthcoming establishment of peace in Europe. In the meantime, there is scarcely a nation concerning which public opinion in Europe is less informed; we mean as regards the past, present, and the aspirations of the Slovenes.

We therefore consider it by no means superfluous to draw the special attention of our British readers to the important questions bound up with the fate of the Slovenes. We have already, in our "Southern Slav Library," given a very brief sketch of the position of this branch of the Southern Slavs (see vol. II, pp. 56-64 and pp. 46-55). In this volume we intend to deal fully with the problem, and also to give a picture of the Slovenes, which will enable the reader to realise their importance.

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## I. Historical and Political Evolution of the Slovenes.

From the beginning of the Middle Ages, all Southern Slavs were called Slovenes (Slavs); but as the Croatian and Serbian States arose, the old race-name fell more and more into disuse, giving place to the names of the new States. At the present day the Slovenes alone retain the common original name.

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The Slovenes were the first among the Southern Slavs who formed an organized State. This State, which was founded in the early Middle Ages, included the whole of Inner Austria south of the Danube, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, the Adriatic coast-lands, part of the Tyrol, Salzburg and Upper Austria. In the South West, their power extended as far as Tagliamento in Friuli, and beyond lake Balaton in the North East. It was not due to lack of political acumen that the Slovene state failed to survive side by side with the Croat and Serb states. Upon the Slovenes devolved the heavy task of warding off the formidable advance of Mediaeval Germanism. It was their misfortune that they had been forced to found their state in the very high-road of the nations, at the cross-roads where meet the civilisations of the East and West. The Slovenes of the Middle Ages had two great forces ranged against them, one social, and one political, viz., the Church of Rome and the German Empire. As at every turning-point in their history, the Slovenes turned for help in their struggle to their brothers in the South, the Croats and Serbs, under Ljudevit Posavski, but they were nevertheless defeated.

With the help of German colonists, the Austrian hereditary territories were Germanised. In 952, the German Emperor, Otto I. created the Duchy of Carantania, in which all Slovene territories were united.

Eventually the eastern march of the Babenberg princes detached itself from Old Carantania. Just as the Slovene Emperor Samo had in the past created an Empire which included the Slovenes, the Czechs and the Elbe Slavs, even so the Bohemian king, Premysl Ottokar sought to re-group the Northern and Southern Slavs in



one nation. After the defeat of Ottokar in 1278, the creation of Austria devolved upon the German dynasty of the Habsburgs.

At first the House of Habsburg had dangerous rivals in the Counts of Celje (Cilli), whose ambitious glances were directed towards the Slav South and who aimed at a unification of all the Southern Slav lands under their own rule.

The Slovene aristocracy existed until far into the Middle Ages. Until the 13th century the Slovene language enjoyed a public and legal status. It was spoken at the court in Vienna no less than at the courts of the princes of Carantania.

The former dukedom of Carantania remained to all intents and purposes intact under the Habsburgs; because Carinthia, Carniola, Styria, Gorica, Trieste and Istria formed a territorial group, which has remained unseparated to the present day, a unit both from the economic point of view and from the standpoint of historic rights.

The great historic events of the Turkish wars, the Reformation, and the peasant rising (end of the XVI century) bear witness to the solidarity of all Southern Slavdom.

In the 18th century, under Joseph II (1780-1790) it seemed as if his efforts at Germanisation would complete the work begun by Charlemagne, when salvation came from an unexpected quarter in the form of the French Revolution.

It was France who re-united the Southern Slavs, who had been kept apart for so many centuries. By the peace

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of Schönbrunn, the Provinces Illyriennes were created in 1809. With the clear vision of genius, Napoleon realised the economic unity of the Slovene and Croat territory, when he united Gorica-Gradiška, Trieste and Istria, Dalmatia and part of Croatia in one administrative unit. The idea of annexing the Illyrian littoral to Italy was emphatically rejected by Napoleon. The Illyrian lands were to be the link between the East and the West. Napoleon I. was the first statesman who appreciated the Southern Slav problem at its true value.

The Illyrian movement of the 'thirties of last century\* was a profoundly significant literary and political movement which aimed at uniting the Slovenes and Croats with the Serbs. One of the leaders of this movement was a Slovene, Stanko Vraz. One of the results of the Illyrian movement was the political agitation of 1848. The triple kingdom of Dalmatia-Croatia-Slavonia was to be federated with the Serbian Vojvodina as well as with the territories inhabited by the Slovenes (Art. II., 6 of the resolutions of the Croatian Sabor, 1848). In a petition addressed to the Sovereign in April 1848, the Slovenes of Inner Austria demanded their reunion with their Croat and Serb brothers.

The most important political idea of 1848 was undoubtedly the desire for a union of all Slovenes under one single national administration — "Slovenia." In the Constitutional Committee of the Kremsier Reichsrat it was one of the leaders of the German Liberal party who advocated the creation of a Slovene national State.

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\*See "Southern Slav Culture" (Southern Slav Library, IV.), p. 17 ff.

But all these plans were frustrated by the Absolutist régime. In the beginning of the constitutional era Schmerling, by the Constitution of February 1861, rendered the position of the Slovenes more unfavourable than it had ever been before.

The laws and regulations of 1867 meant, in practice, the political downfall of the Slovenes. Far from creating a Slovene Diet, the February Constitution obliged the Slovenes to send their delegates to six different diets. Only in one of these, the Carniolian, could the Slovenes ever hope for a majority; in all the others they were condemned to remain in minority. Moreover the Slovene administrative territory was dismembered, Carinthia, Carniola and the Illyrian coastlands thenceforth forming completely distinct administrative districts.

A certain historic justification may be claimed for the so-called Maribor (Marburg) programme of 1865. The Slovene political leaders assembled in Marburg demanded the formation of a territorial group corresponding to the ancient Duchy of Carantania. The coastlands with Carinthia and Carniola were to be united, form a kingdom of Illyria, and have a joint Diet with Styria. In all districts where different nationalities lived side by side, the national minority was to be equally protected. A year later saw the publishing of the pamphlet: "Slovenes, what do we want?" which clearly showed the Southern Slav Idea, *i.e.* the idea of the union of the Slovenes with the Croats and Serbs.

But at that time the shadow of the Dualism—called "the grave of our life" by the Slovenes—had already

fallen upon the Empire. In 1868 the Slovene lands were the scene of a great popular movement. The Slovene political programme was formulated at great mass meetings, called *Tabori*. A united Slovenia with a native administration, the recognition of Slovene as an official language, and a law which would protect national rights—these were the principal items in the political programme put forward at the *Tabori*.

The December Constitution guaranteed certain political rights half-heartedly granted and was, as a matter of fact, an unparalleled piece of political hypocrisy. As the Government could not see its way to making Article XIX a law, the right of national equality remained a dead-letter. When it came to formulating the administrative regulations, these turned out to be merely weak-kneed compromises. Expressions, such as “in so far as may be feasible” (*nach Tunlichkeit*) were inserted purposely to afford full scope to the discretion of the officials. The supremacy of the German and Italian languages had to be contested step by step in school and in the courts. The advantages which the Slovenes obtained in some small measure under Taaffe, were entirely lost under his successors, under the irresistible pressure of Pangermanism. More and more did the Government enter upon the fatal downward path which was to lead it to a complete bankruptcy of every conception of law and right and to the social and political downfall of the Monarchy.

## II. Slovene and Sloveno-Croat Territory.

The Slovene lands, *i.e.* the countries inhabited by the Slovene branch of the Southern Slav family, include Carniola, Carinthia, the Illyrian littoral and Styria.

Their neighbours in the south are the Italians, in the north the Germans, and in the east the Magyars, and the boundary might be defined in the following manner:—

(1) The western frontier begins at Trieste, follows the Adriatic coastline as far as Devin and Tržič (Monfalcone), and then passes between Gradiška and Gorica. Near the town of Kormin (Cormons) the linguistic boundary crosses the Austro-Italian frontier and includes the Slovenes in the province of Udine in Italy.

(2) The northern frontier extends from Pontabel (Pontafel) northwards as far as Šmohor (St. Hermagos); from here it passes to Radgona (Radkersburg) in Styria, after including the Slovene sphere of Beljak (Villach), Celovec (Klagenfurth), and the Vrbsko Jezero (Lake of Woerth). In Styria the frontier passes from the village of Glažuta to Spielfeld, and then between Maribor (Marburg) and Graz to the Hungarian frontier.

(3) The eastern frontier, which touches Magyar ethnical territory, extends from Radgona to the river Mur, and then northwards as far as St. Gotthard on the Raba (Raab).

In Istria the Southern Slavs form a continuous population, in a continuous territory, unbroken in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the province. Furthermore their territory extends at several points (Hrebi, Skofije, Lazare, Sanudrija, Kastel, Vobriga, Furtine, Peroj and Stujan) and touches the sea, so that the Italians can only claim possession of the western coast

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towns. Both in the interior and on the east coast the Italian element is only found in small islets, composed chiefly of Italianised Slavs.

Istria, including the Quarnero Isles, has a superficial area of 4,956 square km., and according to a computation by no means favourable to the Slavs, 4,053.68 square km. are owned by Southern Slavs and only 902.12 square km. by Italians.

### III. The Population.

According to the Austrian official census, there are 491,000 Slovenes in Carniola, 410,000 in Styria, 120,000 in Carinthia, and 437,385 Slovenes and Croats in the Austro-Illyrian littoral. It is obvious that owing to the method according to which the census is taken, no less than to countless falsifications, the figures fall far short of the truth. According to the estimate of Professor Niederle, the Slovenes number 1,500,000, including the 35,000 in the kingdom of Italy and 102,000 who live in Hungary.

The results of the following census-takings show with what vigour Pangermanism is striving to reach the Adriatic and at the same time to crush the Slovenes. In 1851, the Slovene population of Styria amounted to 36.15 per cent.; in 1910, it had fallen to 29.37 per cent. In Carinthia it has within sixty years fallen from 29.99 per cent. to 21.23 per cent. In Trieste the percentage only amounted to 29.71 per cent. even in 1851. Comparison with the percentage of to-day will show the absurdity of the allegation that Trieste is being artificially slavified. In Carniola there is a minority of 6 per cent. of non-Slavs, which is insignificant compared

to the Slovene majority of 94 per cent. Lower Styria possesses several towns and boroughs described as German ethnic centres. Yet in Maribor and Celje, the two largest towns in Lower Styria, 71 per cent. and 69 per cent. respectively of the population are of Slovene origin. Of 100 inhabitants of Trieste, 30 are domiciled in Slovene or Croat parishes, and 42 belong to the native population of the territory of Trieste.

In 1857 the majority of the population of Celovec (Klagenfurt) was Slovene, and even to-day 37.78 per cent. of the population of the capital of Carinthia are of Slovene origin.

In the littoral, in Trst (Trieste), Istria and the County of Gorica—with the exception of the Italian districts of Gradiška and Tržić (Monfalcone), the limit of the Italian ethnic continuity—there are only 284,325 Italians as against 431,023 Southern Slavs. In the entire County of Gorica, excluding the above-named districts, there are only 17,577 Italians to 148,386 Jugoslavs; in the town of Gorica itself, which is situated in Slav territory, only half the population is Italian. Even in Trieste and its vicinity there are 60,074 Southern Slavs to 118,959 Italians, and in Istria only 145,525 Italians to 220,382 Southern Slavs.

The population of Pola includes 15,931 Southern Slavs and 29,108 Italians, but the tendency of the census statistics to be unfavourable to the Slavs is best proved by the fact that at the elections for the Reichsrat in 1911, the Southern Slav candidate in Pola polled 3,400 votes, while the Italian candidate, even with the help of the Germans, only polled 3,700 votes, that is to say, an almost insignificant majority. In Trieste the numerical

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proportions between the nationalities in the town and its surroundings may be approximately gauged from the results of the general elections for the Vienna Reichsrat in 1911. In the city of Trieste the Italian candidates polled 13,145 votes (70 per cent.) and the Southern Slavs 5,647 votes (30 per cent.). In the other districts of the town the Slav candidates polled 5,006 votes, or 81 per cent. and the Italians only 1,192 or 19 per cent. The total proportions for Trieste and its surroundings are, therefore, represented by 14,373 Italian votes (57.5 per cent.) to 10,650 (or 42.5 per cent.) Southern Slav votes. During the last elections for the Vienna Parliament the Italian candidate for Gorica polled 1,792 votes, to the 1,166 votes polled by the Southern Slav candidate.

### IV. The National Struggle against the Germans.

During the first ten years of the present century it seemed as if the Viennese Government had made up its mind at all costs to make an end of the Slovenes, so that Germany might encounter no obstacle when she deemed the time propitious to break down the old Habsburg Empire. The Slovenes in Styria and Carinthia were the first to be attacked.

The Slovenes of Lower Styria, numbering half a million, form a compact ethnic unit, whose frontier runs south of Graz, the capital of Styria.

The following statistical data were compiled in 1905, and it should be noted that since then the position has become considerably worse for the Slovenes; still, the figures quoted will clearly prove how tenaciously



Austria, helped by the whole of the German official administrative machinery, has laboured at the Germanisation of this half million Slovenes in Styria. In the lieutenancy of Styria there is not one Slovene among the Government officials having a University legal training. Of the Styrian district officials, only two are Slovenes. Of the finance officials, only one is a Slovene. Of the officials employed in administration of the Postal and Telegraphic service in Styria and Carinthia, only three are Slovenes. In the administrative service of the provincial government of the Duchy of Styria, there is not even one. Neither the Imperial State Government nor the provincial government of the Duchy will employ Slovene engineers. In the learned professions which are outside the scope of the Germanising official machine, the Slovenes hold their own far better. Two-thirds of the advocates in the Slovene parts of the country are Slovenes and the percentage of German licentiates in law is far less. Although all medical officers appointed by the provincial government and by the State are Germans, yet the percentage of German medical men in private practice is only slightly higher than that of Slovene medical men. These figures prove sufficiently clearly that there are plenty of Slovenes belonging to the learned professions, and that moreover they are set aside by the State and the provincial government in a manner that is both brutal and inexcusable; to be a Slovene is, in fact, a congenital disability in the eyes of Vienna and Graz society.

During recent years the Government has concentrated its efforts upon the nomination of the judges. The slight hold the Slovenes still had upon this profession was lessened year by year. The tendency of the Ministry of

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Justice has been to oust the Slovene judges altogether from Styria. And here we would draw attention to a typically Austrian method of procedure which cannot but lead to the subversion of all State authority.

The official nominations for the whole of the Slovene territory are in the hands of the German Nationalrat (National Council), a committee composed of German politicians. As soon as an appointment becomes vacant, the "Nationalrat" makes enquiries concerning the candidate under consideration, with a view to ascertaining the soundness of his political opinions. If these appear "satisfactory" the Nationalrat insists with the Government upon his appointment; from which one may fairly conclude that the new official will abuse his office in the interests of German nationalism. Owing to this persistent and determined interference by the Nationalrat, there is now scarcely a single Slovene judge left in Lower Styria. A Slovene defendant is brought up before a judge who does not understand his language and is full of prejudice against everything Slovene. Herein lies a fruitful cause of miscarriages of justice and judicial scandals.

Since the administration of justice has become a hotbed of class and race antagonism, the nation has lost all faith in it, and the sense of justice has been undermined in its very foundations. The inevitable results have shown themselves in the disregard of all moral obligations and growing criminal statistics, due to alcoholism, and the lowering of the moral standard induced by political corruption, degenerating into a kind of moral insanity. And all this is the work of Pangerman Chauvinism,

which threatens not only the political freedom of the Slovenes, but their civil and economic future.

Along the north-eastern linguistic frontier a struggle for the soil has developed on the same lines as that in East Prussia.

Armed with funds from the German Empire, German societies have organised a systematic campaign for the occupation of land by buying out the Slovene proprietors and settling German colonists on their land. This struggle for the soil has greatly helped to push back the Slovene linguistic frontier.

In Carinthia the Slovenes are more oppressed even than in Styria. Carinthia is two-thirds German, and the rest is Slovene. According to the official statistics of the census, there are 120,000 Slovenes in Carinthia. In 1861 there were 28 Slovene primary schools in the Slovene part of the province. Fifty years later there were only three. Slovene children of school age understand no German, and are nevertheless compelled to attend German schools; consequently the instruction they receive there is absolutely useless to them, and they receive it through the medium of an interpreter. It is obvious that this absolute neglect of the Slovene rising generation is an evil which is part of the Pangerman plans. It is typical of Austrian affairs that in the scandalous case of the Carinthian schools both the Imperial Court and the Court of Administration gave judgment in favour of the Carinthian Slovenes. Both tribunals saw in the case an infringement of the law of the Empire in the matter of Public Instruction; but the

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German Board of Education in Carinthia paid no attention to law or justice, and the scandal continues to exist.

The Provincial School Board of Carinthia has not even one Slovene member. In the Imperial provincial government in Celovec (Klagenfurth) there is not one official who is conversant with Slovene, and in the local boards there are in all only two district commissioners who can speak Slovene.

All Carinthian Slovenes who enter upon a legal career are sent to Carniola or to Lower Styria before they are appointed judges. Not a single Slovene judge is tolerated in Carinthia, although in consequence of the lack of judges who understand Slovene, Slovene citizens of the Empire who know no other language than their own may suffer irreparable injustice.

Theoretically, the Slovene language enjoys an equal official status, the same as in Carniola and Lower Styria. But since the reign of terror inaugurated by the German Volksrat (National Board), no effect has been spared in endeavouring to suppress the use of Slovene as an official language in the law courts.

The High Provincial Court in Celovec which, up to 1902, had employed the Slovene language in dealing with Slovene cases, now deals with all cases alike in German since 1908, and the Slovenes of Carinthia live exclusively under German Nationalist jurisdiction.

Under these conditions of forcible denationalisation, in the midst of corruption, renegades and informers, no nation would have a chance of wholesome, normal

development. Small wonder that Carinthia is the land of illegitimate children (37.2 per cent., whereas in Carniola they only amount to 6.4 per cent., and in Gorica to 4.8 per cent.), of the systematic alcohol poisoning of women and children, a province that provides the State with proportionately the fewest and the worst recruits.

Such are the conditions in the land where Pangermanism, terrorism and bare-faced administrative tyranny are the means whereby Pangermanism seeks to destroy the Slovenes by induced physical and mental degeneracy. Such is the "Vilayet of Carinthia" as a member of the Vienna Reichsrat once aptly called it in Parliament.

The spectacle of this decadence is a matter of profound regret for Slovene patriots, when they remember that Carinthia was once the cradle of Slovene political life. The author of the pamphlet "Aus dem Vilayet Kärnten" (1913) rightly exclaims: "We have lived in Carinthia since the seventh century; we are the natives of the country, in olden times we employed the Slovene language at the installation of our princes, and to-day we are treated as if we were a band of gipsies just arrived."

This tendency to Germanise the administration and persecute the Slovene officials is equally noticeable in Carniola, that purely Slovene province. Whereas in 1905 only one judge in seven was a German, none but German judges have been recently appointed, especially in the Court of Appeal at Ljubljana (Laibach), and the Slovene element has almost entirely disappeared.

In the administrative service, scarcely one-third of the total number of officials are Slovenes. The President, the Vice-President and the Provincial Government Board are all Germans without exception. In the financial service the Slovenes are in a bare majority.

In all three provinces exposed to the German onslaught, the same phenomena are noticeable, viz.: forcible denationalisation, every effort of the State directed towards the ousting of the Slovene element from the public service, administrative abuse, miscarriages of justice, economic neglect and, finally, on the northern border, a ruthless struggle for the possession of the soil.

## V. The National Struggle in the Illyrian Littoral.

One proof of the extraordinary vitality of the Slovenes is that they have for centuries maintained their struggles against the Germans, the Italians and the Magyars. The other national strategic front, the second in importance, is in the south. Let us hasten to admit that the struggle of the Slovenes against the Italians bears an altogether different character from that waged in the north against the Germans. Reconciliation with the Germans is impossible; it is a case of victory or extinction. The position in the south is totally different. In the County of Gorica and in Istria the Southern Slavs are in numerical majority. If the Italians had chosen to exercise their political acumen, they would long ago have suggested a compromise in nationalist questions with the Slovenes, and the Slovenes would have made every effort to bring about a loyal understanding. Unfortunately, the political leaders of the Italians

allowed themselves to be led astray. Moreover the Italians pursued the short-sighted policy of effecting electoral compromises with the German immigrants. They positively favoured Pangermanism in the belief that they would thereby injure the Slovenes. In all elections, the Italians have always worked hand in hand with the Pangermans.

Does the Adriatic littoral truly belong to the Italians? The most western region, Gorica, consists of two districts which are economically, geographically and as regards nationality, distinct from each other, and it is the easiest thing in the world to draw a dividing line. The plains belong to the Italians, the Brda—the mountains, the Vipava valley and the Kras—belong to the Slovenes. The town of Gorica was founded by the Slovenes. A document from the year 1001 already alludes to it as “*unius ville que Sclavorum lingua vocatur Gorizia.*” To-day the town is economically dependent upon the Slovene district. The Italian urban population is of recent origin. Further eastward, both the east coast and the interior of Istria have a purely Southern Slav population. These parts of Istria have never been in any way subject to the Republic of Venice. On these grounds any historic claims on the part of Italy to two-thirds of Istria are baseless.

Since its foundation, Trieste has been, historically and economically, in opposition to Venice. Venice was the dreaded rival of Trieste. This rivalry has always prevented the population from sinking economic differences in national sentiment. Trieste has always been anti-Italian in the knowledge that without its hinterland it would soon sink to the level of a mere fishing village.

For those who have founded the wealth and prosperity of Trieste it is an axiom that the political separation of Trieste from its hinterland would spell economic ruin to the city.

It was purely an Italo-nationalist ideology which led the nationalist politicians of Trieste into the channels of Italian irredentism, for the Triestine business world would never have entertained the idea of pursuing a policy so fatal to the interests of the town. Angelo Vivante, an eminent Italian publicist, has demonstrated in his book "*Irredentismo adriatico*" (Florence 1912), that the future prosperity of Trieste is incompatible with a union with Italy, that the Southern Slavs have every right to a national development of their own in the Illyrian coastlands and that the attitude of the Italians towards them is both anti-democratic and futile.

To unite the Illyrian Littoral with Italy would be a terrible blow to Southern Slavdom, and an unexampled negation of the principle of nationality. Cantu already called Trieste: "*Il porto della futura Slavia.*" For the Slovenes, its incorporation with Italy would be a mortal blow. The economic strength of the Slovenes dwells in the Littoral. It is in the south that the national consciousness is strongest, it is there that Slovene economic life pulsates most vigorously, and the most practical ideas and political programmes of the Slovenes have their origin: it is there finally, where Slovenes and Croats live side by side, where is the practical laboratory of the Yugoslav thought. Without the Illyrian littoral the Slovene lands would be a mutilated torso—to the incalculable detriment of all the Southern Slavs.



It is necessary to contradict an error which is being widely disseminated by the Italians, viz. that the Slovenes owe their preponderance in the Littoral to the Austrian Government, which is endeavouring to make the administration the monopoly of the Slovenes. The Government has been compelled to tolerate the political influence of the Slovenes because they constitute the majority of the population, and represent a really important factor in the country; the Government merely recognised the existence of a social fact. Although the majority of the population is Southern Slav, Slovene and Croat officials only form a small proportion of the official bureaucracy.

Of the 223 judicial officials, only 51 were Southern Slavs in 1905. In the administrative service the Germans predominate, since out of 99 officials with a university degree in law, 58 are Germans, 25 Italians and only 15 Southern Slavs. In the financial service the Germans take the second place and the Southern Slavs the third. The belittling of the Southern Slav element is clearly demonstrated by these figures. Whatever the Yugoslavs (Southern Slavs) have achieved they owe to their own efforts and not to the bureaucracy.

André Chéradame writes in his celebrated book on Pangermanism:—"L'Europe et la Question d'Autriche" (1901)—that "the Italians in Austria have no reason to complain of the Viennese government which shows every consideration for their national rights . . . The centralist bureaucracy admits, in fact, that the Italianization of Istria and the Dalmatian coast should be facilitated, because it hopes that by opposing the Italians to the Southern Slavs, the natural owners of the soil, Latins

and Slavs will neutralise each other, and that eventually the Germans will find it all the easier to implant themselves in the country."

The policy of the Government is still hostile to the Slovene, as is proved by the fact, that it refuses to provide Slovene schools out of the public funds, thus compelling the Slovenes to keep up their own school system.

We cannot pass over the fact that in the Littoral the beginning of the great war witnessed some of the most terrible instances of administrative abuse. The most prominent Southern Slav intellectuals, scholars, University professors, priests, lawyers, factory owners, judges—in short, representatives of all classes of society were, upon the denunciation of informers, arrested without proof as "political suspects" and cast into prison where they were subjected to all kinds of indignities. The deputy Lieutenant-Governor of the county of Gorica-Gradiška was one of the persons arrested.

The Jugoslavs of the Littoral have always honestly desired to come to a sincere understanding with the Italians, and strongly opposed the Germanophile policy of the Italians in the Littoral.

## VI. Political Parties.

The new electoral law introducing universal suffrage for the Vienna Parliament gave the Slovenes 24 seats. Nevertheless the electoral law of 1907 constitutes a flagrant injustice towards the Slovenes. The 60,074 Slovenes of Trieste have only one member of Parliament, and the 120,000 Carinthian Slovenes are likewise represented

by only one deputy. The very numerous urban element in Lower Styria is not represented at all in the Reichsrat, any more than the Slovene inhabitants of the town of Gorica. The Slovene electoral districts are much larger than the German and Italian. Whereas the former number 40,000 to 70,000 inhabitants, there is a German electoral district of 14,000 inhabitants and, in Carniola, one of 18,000 inhabitants. In Gorica-Gradiška there is an Italian electoral district of 28,000 inhabitants.

The large number of non-Slovene deputies in the various Diets, which is quite out of proportion to the population, must be attributed to the system of *curial* representation, so-called. By this system the German ground-landlords in Carniola—a reactionary social caste without any importance from an economic point of view—are represented by 11 members in the Diet. In Styria one-third of the population is represented by 13 members, and the other two-thirds by 74. It is in Carinthia, however, that this electoral swindle appears most barefaced, since in that province only two seats are allotted to 120,000 Slovenes. In Gorica-Gradiška and in Istria the Southern Slavs form the majority of the population and yet they are in a minority in the Diet.

In the *curia* of the great Istrian estates, which was created to save the Italian majority, 110 electors elect 5 deputies. In Trieste the Italians did all they could to oppose the system of proportionate representation, whereby the Slovenes would have become one of the strongest parties in the Diet, as may be seen from the fact that in the general election for the Reichsrat the Italians polled 14,337 votes, and the Slovenes 10,557.

All Slovene political parties, including the Slovene Social Democrats, are firmly convinced, that the radical solution of the Yugoslav problem is a question of national existence for the Slovenes.

The union with the Croats was several times under discussion in the Carniolian Diet, and the "Slovenska ljudska stranka," which is in the majority there, has definitely pronounced in favour of union with Croatia. The Slovene progressive party has always striven to establish a Southern Slav union. For many years the Slovene Socialists have adopted the idea of the national union of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes as part of their national programme. Thus, with a few negligible political shades of difference all Slovene parties are agreed in desiring to exchange the present political conditions for others which will be in harmony with the idea of Southern Slav unity. Since the beginning of this century, all educated Slovenes have been profoundly convinced that the very existence of the nation will be in jeopardy if the Slovenes are separated from the brothers of their race.

## VII. The Idea of Southern Slav Unity.

Relations with Zagreb have steadily assumed a more real and tangible character. A Yugoslav scientific journal—"the Veda" (Science) was founded, with the object of being devoted specially to the study of the problem of Southern Slav unity. The discussion of this idea became one of the most important questions of the day for the Slovenes. The idea of the national unity

of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, passed into the minds and souls of the Slovene educated classes and no less than of the masses of the people.

Then came the Balkan wars, which aroused the interest in the Slav question to fever-pitch. A fruitful crop of reviews in the Southern Slav language suddenly made their appearance. The entire youth of the race without exception joined the Southern Slav movement. Neither the intellectuals nor the political parties could abstain from taking part in it. When the Balkan wars so gloriously vindicated the vitality of the Southern Slav thought, no one need be surprised if the idea of a Serbo-Croato-Slovene nation began to assume a tangible form. Police precautions proved absolutely powerless against the idea of Southern Slav unity in the hearts of the Slovenes. To a nation like the Slovenes, placed between the alternatives of national life and death, the Southern Slav Idea could not fail to bring deliverance from the terrible dread of extinction; it was a choice between being and non-being.

The Southern Slav point of view is clearly expressed in the following resolution passed in 1913:—

“Since it is a fact that the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs form a compact ethnic and linguistic group of similar economic structure and inseparably linked by a common destiny, so that there can be no separate future for any one of them—and in view of the fact that the national idea is already strongly developed among the Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats, we now extend our national consciousness beyond our frontiers of to-day to include the Croats and Serbs, even as among

these the idea of national reciprocity with the Slovenes is gaining ground. Hereby we shall all become members of a common Southern Slav (Jugoslav) nation. This is the spirit that should animate all Jugoslavs. As regards the Slovenes we would draw special attention to the fact that the evolution of their national consciousness towards a desire to create the solid foundation of Jugoslavdom, has materially strengthened their resistance against denationalisation and foreign Imperialism."

### VIII. National Organisation of the Slovenes.

In order to be able to resist the terrific onslaughts of Pangermanism in the North and of Italianism in the South, the Slovenes were obliged to form organizations for their defence. Soon after the foundation of the German School Union, Slovene political men set to work to form a National School Union—the *Družba Sv. Cirila in Metoda* ("Society of SS. Cyril and Method"). In 1913 the funds of the *Družba* had increased to 1,203,326 k.

During recent years the burden of maintaining the Slav schools in Trieste fell entirely on the shoulders of the "*Družba*," whose revenues were spent specially on the Littoral. For Istria there is the Croation *Družba Sv. Cirila i Metoda za Istru*, whose income in 1913 amounted to 213,000 k. and the expenses to 208,000 k.

Besides the "*Družba Sv. Cirila in Metoda*," the Slovenes possess a second branch of national defence,

the *Branibor* and *Straža*, whose object it is to counteract the activity of the German "Südmark."

The percentage of illiterates among the Slovenes in Gorica-Gradiška is 15.51, in Carinthia 12.29, in Carniola 12.19, in Trieste 8.52, in Styria 2.92 per cent, which means that as regards education they take a high place among the Slavs. In the province of Gorica-Gradiška the percentage of Slovene illiterates is far lower than that of the Italian element. The Slovenes possess a Society for the distribution of good and popular literature the *Družba Sv. Mohorja* (Society of S. Mohor)—of which one Slovene in ten is a member. An innate love of knowledge is very great among the mass of the Slovene people. The *Slovenska Matica* (Slovene literary society) possesses an honourable tradition of intellectual achievement having for its object the publication of scientific and literary works. At the beginning of the war the society was dissolved by the Government on suspicion of Panserb tendencies; its funds, which were fairly considerable, were confiscated, although its activity was of a purely intellectual character, and quite untouched by politics.

The Yugoslav Academy of Science and Art in Zagreb is an institution which serves the interests of Serbs, and Croats, and Slovenes, and in the *Glasbena Matica* in Ljubljana, the Slovenes possess an excellent institution for fostering national music.

### IX. National Economics.

The Germano-Magyar domination has been a great obstacle to the economic development of the Austrian Jugoslavs; however, without paying too much heed to the ill-will of the State, the Slovenes and Croats applied their energies to creating their own national and economic organization.

The Slovenes and Croats are a nation of small-holders. The Carinthian and Styrian farmer is richer, but the return per acre is at a higher level in the Littoral. The Slovene part of Styria possesses a well-developed hop-culture. In the Alpine districts, cattle-rearing is the farmer's chief source of income. In the South intensive culture is practised, and wine and sub-tropical fruits are exported in great quantities.

The annexation of Gorica-Gradiška and Istria by Italy would spell economic ruin for these two provinces. More than 80 per cent. of the population is occupied in wine and fruit growing. One-half of the wine is exported. As the cost of production in the Littoral is twice as high as it is in Southern Italy, a competition with Italian wines is out of the question.

Owing to the climatic conditions it would be impossible to cultivate a different type of produce.

Almost all wholesale manufacture and industrial enterprise in the Slovene lands has been financed with German capital, a circumstance constituting a grave national peril to the Slovenes. It is of the utmost importance



that the capital of the French and English markets should begin to take an interest in Slovene industry. The Slovene lands possess extensive coalfields in Trbovlje (Trifail), Zagorje (Sagor), and Hrastnik, and their mineral wealth in other respects is also very great (mines at Tržić, Idrija, and especially in Carinthia).

The small industry is mainly in the hands of Slovenes; 88.85 per cent. of all industrial activity in Carniola is represented by small firms. The small manufacturer and the small-holder are responsible for the democratic structure of Slovene society.

The inexhaustible water power in the Alpine districts is in itself a guarantee of vigorous industrial development.

The exceedingly bad economic conditions in Austria have been the cause of emigration to such an extent that the fruit-growing districts have become almost depopulated.

Slovene commerce has in recent years made great progress in Trieste. The timber trade and the wholesale trade in products of the country are both almost exclusively in the hands of the Slovenes. Many wholesale firms are owned by Slovenes. The retail trade and local industry are also mainly Slovene.

The Slovenes possess great natural commercial ability, and have every qualification for the development of a prosperous merchant class.

In 1905 the trade of the port of Trieste, both import and export, amounted to 30.01 million quintals. In 1909 trade had increased to 50.5 million quintals. Several wholesale factories and ship-building yards give bread and employment to thousands of workmen. In 1912 the export of the port of Trieste amounted to 4.6 million tons, and the import to 4.7 million tons. Of all this tonnage, 4,336,000 sailed under the Austrian flag, 1,795,000 under the Italian, and only 490,000 under the British. It is obvious that the separation of Trieste from its hinterland will spell economic ruin for both.

The Slovenes have admirably organised co-operative mutual aid societies and in this respect are second only to the Czechs and Germans. In 1910 there were in the Slovene provinces 1267 co-operative societies. The total assets of these co-operative societies amounted to 365 million kr. of invested capital. The organisation of credit proved a powerful weapon in the struggle against both Germans and Italians. The foundation of the Slovene co-operative societies was followed by a brisk development of the banking business. The Yugoslav "Adriatic Bank" in Trieste soon became one of the leading banks; it is the only local bank of really great importance, whereas the Italians do not possess even a single large bank.

The land between the Drave and the Adriatic is a dyke which holds back the German tide. It is to the vital interest of France and England—and nothing would disconcert the German plans of conquest more completely—that the territory to the north of the Adriatic should be drawn into the economic spheres of France and England.

## X. Political Aims and Tendencies.

All Jugoslavs (Southern Slavs) are inspired by a great longing for union, and any infringement of the principle of nationality, such as the establishment of an Italian political and commercial monopoly of the Adriatic would arouse unbounded resentment among the Jugoslavs. A good third of the Slovenes in the western provinces would thereby be handed over to Italy. Could this possibly benefit the interests of the Entente, or of a peaceful community of States and nations?

The problem of the balance of power in Europe imperatively demands that this both geographically and economically important territory of the Jugoslavs situated between the Drave and the Adriatic should remain outside the sphere of German influence. Only by the World War has the terrible military and economic power of Germany been fully revealed. Even if Germany is defeated in this fearful struggle, she will none the less remain a formidable power, and will not find it difficult, with her compact population of 70,000,000 to renew her pressure towards the Adriatic, more especially if unstable national and political conditions are established in the territory to the north of the Adriatic.

Only if the territorial problem of the Illyrian coast is solved in accordance with national justice, and if the idea of Jugoslav unity is not sacrificed, will the Jugoslavs be able to successfully resist Pangerman designs upon Trieste. Only a Jugoslavdom that has not been crippled by amputations in the west will be equal to the task of fulfilling its great historic mission.

Already Napoleon looked upon the Slovene lands as the sally-port towards the East. A project of British origin has lately clothed Napoleon's idea in a new form. Both France and Great Britain require a continental connection with the East; but this will only become possible if the Slovene territory is incorporated with a Yugoslav State, whose political existence is rendered absolutely secure. A railway running from Cervignano on the Italian frontier via Vipava, Logatec and Ljubljana, through to Zagreb and Belgrade would constitute an important artery for French and British commercial relations with the Balkans and Asia.

Only a strong and united Southern Slav State can truly fulfil its great task; and a Jugoslavia which can benefit by the good qualities of Slovene social psychology will be a healthy and useful state.

It frequently happens that the religious element is quoted as constituting a danger and possible obstacle to Southern Slav unity. Without wishing to minimize the force of the religious factor, it must not be forgotten that no Church has ever yet succeeded in thwarting the process of national unification. Rome could not prevent the unification of Italy, and unified Germany contains both Protestants and Catholics. A state comprising several confessions cannot but be favourable to the development of true religious life.

It is a commonplace to maintain that the great War was brought about in consequence of the German and Austrian policy of national oppression. The principles of a reactionary policy of the past ought surely to have

become discredited by now. The political principles which have been disinterred from the grave of the past are firstly, political coercion instead of the recognition of the principle of nationality; secondly, the establishment of artificial political barriers to prevent national unification; and finally, speculations founded on the very antagonism which the Jugoslavs are anxious to conciliate. International justice, the spiritual unity of Europe, and the happiness of many nations should not be sacrificed to a political system which is guided by these axioms. The unification of the Southern Slavs is a natural inevitable process, and it is futile to try to prevent it by artificial means.

It is one of the duties of international justice, which ought to be in accordance with the principal of nationality, that all territories inhabited compactly by Jugoslavs should be incorporated together in the same national State.

Italy's claim to these districts under the pretext that they would give her a strategic frontier, is not tenable, because the plateau of the Kras in the littoral is the natural continuation of the geographical conformation of the other Southern Slav lands.

Vainly do we seek in history for a precedent for the present war. But this unexampled struggle must be followed by a universal reform and a political order which shall do justice to all. A just and general solution of all the political problems of Europe will be the only fit compensation, the only result worthy of this fearful agony.

In the interests of Europe, the Jugoslavs of the territory between the Drave and the Adriatic ought to be delivered from a degrading national, social and economic oppression, and be given a fair chance of that development which will be the worthy fruit of their intelligence and energy. A thousand years' struggle would thus terminate in a victory for the Slovenes, the vanguard of the Southern Slavs against the Germans. The enjoyment of a free political and social democracy would be a fitting reward for the steadfastness and devotion with which they have warded off the German attacks at the cost of heavy sacrifices. The tendency of Pangermanism to destroy civilisation and the peaceful co-existence of the nations will always find a staunch and determined foe in the Southern Slavs.

And by creating a type of democracy devoted to the labours of peace and civilisation, the Southern Slavs will pay their debt of gratitude to European society.

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